

TREASURE CHEST

Written by

Jolly Roger

FADE IN:

EXT. TOPSAIL ISLAND SOUND - DAY

SUPER: TOPSAIL ISLAND 1920

A rowboat bobs gently in the small waves on a summer day.

In the boat, BOBBY, 12, a middle class kid, fiddles with the reel on his wooden pole. At the other end of the boat, BOBBY'S FATHER, 45, a successful man with an afternoon off, smokes a pipe and slowly reels in his line.

Bobby clumsily misses the pole, and the reel falls into the water. The splash causes his Father to turn.

BOBBY
(pointing to the water)
My reel.

His Father takes out his pipe.

BOBBY'S FATHER
It's not deep.

Bobby understands. He peels off his shirt and shoes and dives over the side while his Father balances the boat.

While he waits, Bobby's Father knocks out the ashes from his pipe and tests the draw. As he reaches for the tobacco pouch in his pocket, Bobby surfaces. He shows the reel to his father.

BOBBY'S FATHER (CONT'D)
Good job.

BOBBY
There's something down there.

BOBBY'S FATHER
Something?

BOBBY
A box.

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT

A 12x12x12, corroded, metal box sits on the work bench in this old fashioned garage. To one side sits a 1920 car. By the bench stand Bobby and his Father. They examine this artifact hauled to the surface.

BOBBY'S FATHER
Go ahead, try.

Bobby grabs the box and tries to pull off the lid, but it's too corroded.

BOBBY
It won't open.

Bobby's Father hands him a hack saw.

BOBBY'S FATHER
Everything opens sooner or later.

Bobby grins and sets the hack saw.

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - GARAGE - LATER

Sweating, Bobby has finished sawing through the box. With his Father's help, they wrestle off the top.

Bobby pulls out a perfectly dry, small, wooden chest of intricate design. He sets it on the bench and lifts the lid. Inside, the driest tea leaves ever, leaves hundreds of years old.

BOBBY'S FATHER
It's a tea chest.

BOBBY
Where did it come from?

BOBBY'S FATHER
Some ship. Got dumped or lost when the ship foundered.

BOBBY
Foundered?

BOBBY'S FATHER
Sank.

BOBBY
Oh.

Bobby's Father reaches into the box.

BOBBY'S FATHER
What's this.

He pulls out a shiny, gold doubloon.

BOBBY
What's that?

BOBBY'S FATHER
Treasure.

INT. MOLLY'S ANTIQUES - DAY

SUPER PRESENT DAY

The intricate tea chest sits on a small table from the 19th century. Looking at the chest is CLAIRE SLEEVE, 35, pretty in shorts and top, a interior decorator on the prowl. She touches the chest and looks across the small store.

CLAIRE
Know anything about this chest?

Behind the counter, MOLLY, 55, heavy, her tank top does nothing for the fat. She looks up from a celeb magazine.

MOLLY
Not a thing. The seller said it came from his grandmother's estate.

CLAIRE
Know anything about grandma?

MOLLY
Nada.

Claire opens the tea chest which is empty.

CLAIRE
Have any idea what this was used for?

MOLLY
Treasure.

Molly laughs loudly.

CLAIRE
(to herself)
Yeah, a treasure chest.
(to Molly)
What do you want for it?

MOLLY
More treasure.

She laughs again.

EXT. MOLLY'S ANTIQUES - DAY

A single, small building on an asphalt road with a dirt parking lot.

Claire exits with the tea chest under her arm. She walks to her dusty convertible and places the chest in the trunk. Donning sunglasses, she gets behind the wheel.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Claire's store filled with color boards, paint samples, fabrics, floor and tile samples, an interior decorator's show room.

Behind the counter, FRANCOIS, 40, rail thin in artsy black and silver rings, bald, affected, another decorator.

FRANCOIS

(on cell)

No, darling, you cannot use cherry paneling in a beach house. For one thing, the sea salt will play havoc with le bois. For another, your friends will know you're incredibly dull.

Through the door comes Claire, the chest under her arm. Francois holds up a finger as he talks.

FRANCOIS (CONT'D)

(on phone)

It's a beach house, not a hunting lodge. Glass, white, and blue. Nautical, think la mer. Oui, call me tomorrow.

She places the chest on the counter as he kills his connection. When he talks with Claire, his affectation disappears.

FRANCOIS (CONT'D)

What have we here?

CLAIRE

A tea nee treasure chest.

He examines the chest with a practiced eye.

FRANCOIS

What year is this? I don't think I've ever seen anything like it?

CLAIRE
No history. What do you think?

FRANCOIS
It's old, and the carving is quite ornate, very different.

CLAIRE
I'm thinking 18th, maybe 17th century.

FRANCOIS
No one knows nothing?

CLAIRE
Dead owners tell no tales.

FRANCOIS
Are you thinking the cabin?

CLAIRE
I'm not thinking anything until we add some history. Attach this to a British queen, and the price skyrockets.

FRANCOIS
Google?

CLAIRE
Start digging.

FRANCOIS
Post a photo?

CLAIRE
Not yet. If this piece is unique, we don't want to stoke someone's imagination.

FRANCOIS
Roger that. Your messages are on your desk. Jaxi called twice.

CLAIRE
You couldn't handle it?

FRANCOIS
Jaxi doesn't talk to my kind.

Claire laughs.

CLAIRE
She should see you at a rodeo.

FRANCOIS
Not bloody likely.

EXT. PARKER'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

A modern townhouse in a row of townhouses. Walking away from a taxi is PARKER MASON, 30, muscular, carrying a duffel. He looks like the bad boy he's become. He reaches the door and unlocks it.

INT. PARKER'S TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Parker enters, drops his duffel, and takes off his shades.

In front of him, his place has been ransacked. Everything has been taken apart and tossed on the floor. A first-class burglary.

He takes off, tearing through the mess and up the stairs as fast as he can run.

INT. PARKER'S TOWNHOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bedroom has been trashed. Parker bursts into the room and straight to the bureau.

He stares at the empty bureau before he whirls and tears into the flotsam and jetsam around him, tossing blankets and pillows, kicking away dumped clothes.

PARKER
Shit! Shit, shit, shit!

He stops and closes his eyes. Then, he SCREAMS in frustration.

Pressure relieved, he takes out his cell and dials 911.

PARKER (CONT'D)
(on phone)
I've been robbed.

EXT. JAXI'S HOUSE - GARDEN - EVENING

JAXI JOHNSTON, 70s, sips lemonade in a classic Southern garden, flowers and shrubs and beauty. Part of a fine, big Southern home. The heat doesn't bother her as she talks on a cordless phone.

JAXI

Now, Claire, I'm not accepting some moth-eaten bear rug. It might be a mountain cabin, but it needs a softer touch. You received the photos?

Through the garden stumbles GRAHAM MASON, 22, the proverbial prodigal son. He looks high, and he is. If he sees Jaxi, it doesn't show. But she sees him.

JAXI (CONT'D)

I beg your pardon, but I have to end our discussion. Please call me tomorrow. Thank you.

Frowning, she pushes to her feet and shuffles after Graham.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A messy but well-appointed suite. Graham pulls out a bureau drawer and retrieves a baggy of marijuana. Grinning, he opens the baggy and grabs some weed. He fishes out a pipe and loads it.

JAXI (O.S.)

What are you doing?

Graham whirls to face Jaxi whose dander is up.

GRAHAM

Nothing, grandma.

He tries to hide the pipe and weed behind his back. She marches over.

JAXI

Show me your hands.

He hesitates, too drugged to figure a way out.

JAXI (CONT'D)

Show me!

He shows her his hands, and she grabs his pipe.

JAXI (CONT'D)

What did I tell you? None of these decadent shenanigans in my house. It's harmful and illegal, and I won't have it.

Anger surges through Graham.

GRAHAM

You don't know anything. The cops don't arrest you unless you got enough to sell.

(grabs the pipe)

And this ain't enough to worry about.

JAXI

I will not--

Her voice catches. Fear fills her face as pain wracks her chest. She clutches her blouse.

JAXI (CONT'D)

Graham--

She reaches for him, and he steps away, letting her collapse to the floor. She GURGLES at his feet. He does nothing to help. With callow disregard he pulls out his lighter and fires up his pipe as he walks out.

INT. INNER SPACE - MORNING

Francois sips espresso while he surfs on his laptop. Claire enters with a foam cup of coffee and the morning paper.

CLAIRE

Get to work, Frenchy. We lost one yesterday.

FRANCOIS

A big one? And I am working. Trying to find your chest.

CLAIRE

Jaxi of the mountain cabin. And my chest is fine.

FRANCOIS

Ouch. Not your chest chest, your treasure chest. That didn't come out right either.

He points to the ornate tea chest.

CLAIRE

Any answers? How long do we wait before we see the executor for our money?

FRANCOIS

Lots of chests but nothing like ours. Stories too but no links that help. If I were you, I'd file a claim today.

She walks into the back office.

CLAIRE

After the funeral, Frenchy, after the funeral.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Graham and Parker, in black, stand side by side in front of a coffin still above ground. Next to them, ANN MASON, 50, tan and thin and flaky, the mother of Graham and Parker. Behind them, several rows of MOURNERS.

One row behind the trio stands JAYDEN MABURY, 40, handsome in all black, the family attorney.

INT. JAYDEN MABURY OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The expansive conference room of a successful attorney. On one side of the table sit Parker, Graham, and Ann. On the other sit Jayden and his ASSISTANT, 25, pretty female.

JAYDEN

Miss Jaxi neither made any changes to her will nor indicated that she was considering any changes.

PARKER

We know that. What we don't know is the contents of the will.

ANN

Let him finish, Parker.

GRAHAM

Yeah, what did she leave us?

JAYDEN

I'm afraid she didn't leave much to you, Graham. A small amount and the right to continue to live in the family home.

GRAHAM

What?

PARKER

I suppose she left zip for me.

JAYDEN

The same as your brother, minus the basement bedroom.

GRAHAM

Then, who the hell gets all the money?

JAYDEN

That would be your mother, Ann. The bulk of the estate goes to her.

Graham turns on Ann.

GRAHAM

She left everything to you? Hell, you haven't been around for ten years.

PARKER

(to Jayden)

Are you sure about this. Our mother abandoned the whole family.

JAYDEN

I'm afraid the instructions are explicit.

ANN

Oh my. I had no idea.

GRAHAM

This is bullshit!

(stands)

I'm not going to take it. I deserve more. I'll get my own attorney.

Graham stomps out of the room.

PARKER

(to Ann)

You know, Grandma always thought you would come back some day. Now, you have, and you're the big winner.

ANN

I...I...I didn't know.

PARKER
(to Jayden)
Who gets the doubloon?

INT. PARKER'S TOWNHOUSE - GREAT ROOM - DAY

Parker, in shorts and tee, sips ice tea and watches ROGER, 50s, smarmy in wrinkled pants and worn shirt, walk around the room. Roger holds a clipboard stuffed with pages.

ROGER
Looks like you put the place to rights.

PARKER
I'm missing half my stuff. I wouldn't call that put to rights.

Roger pauses to look at Parker before he continues.

ROGER
You know how long I've been an insurance adjustor?

PARKER
If I answer correctly, do I get my check faster?

ROGER
You know, that's the trouble with the younger generation. You always got a smartass remark, a smartass remark. Like that makes you bright or something.

PARKER
What if I play dumb?

ROGER
You don't have to play.

PARKER
You're really bumping it. OK, what's the bottom line? You gonna nickel and dime my claim?

ROGER
I've been a claims adjustor a long time. And I have to admit, it's not the most lucrative job in the world.

Parker taps his foot, impatient as hell. Roger pulls a photo from the clipboard and hands it to Parker.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Know what that is?

PARKER
Looks like my back door after some asshole busted in.

ROGER
Yes, it's your door. Notice anything funny about it?

PARKER
What am I not seeing?

ROGER
No glass.

PARKER
No glass?

ROGER
No glass. If someone had broken in from outside, there would be glass. But the glass was all on the outside.

PARKER
Someone broke it from inside the house.

ROGER
Like I said, I've been doing this a long time. Have any idea how many times there was no glass?

Parker shrugs.

ROGER (CONT'D)
You're right, it doesn't matter. What matters is that this job pays like crap.

PARKER
You think I robbed myself? I was out of town when it happened.

ROGER
The smart ones are always out of town.

PARKER

Look, this is bullshit. I didn't rob myself, and I didn't arrange for someone to rob me.

ROGER

No glass. The penalty for insurance fraud is more years than you can afford to lose.

Parker stands.

PARKER

I'm going to give you ten seconds to get the fuck out. Then, I'm going to call your boss.

Roger shakes his head.

ROGER

A long time, Parker, a long time. I highlight that photo, and your claim goes into the great black hole known as the court system. Even if you win, and you won't, you'll spend more on lawyers than you'll collect.

PARKER

You don't scare me.

ROGER

I don't want to scare you. I want you to think. If I approve your claim, you get your money with no questions asked. What's it worth to you to get my approval?

Parker's eyes narrow.

ROGER (CONT'D)

Think of me as a partner, like the guy who pretended to make this look like a smash and grab. That guy sold your stuff and cashed in. Hell, he might have split with you. I, on the other hand, don't have anything. Shouldn't your partners make a little?

PARKER

How much do you want?

ROGER
I think I'm worth ten percent, what do you think?

PARKER
I should kick your ass.

ROGER
And lose ninety percent? Come on, Parker, you're not that dumb.

PARKER
Smarter than my 'partner'?

ROGER
Exactly.

PARKER
How do I know it will stop at ten percent?

ROGER
I'll tell you a story.

PARKER
I don't have time.

ROGER
Yes, you do. It's a good story.

They exchange stares a moment.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Lenny had a jewelry store. Not the biggest, not the priciest, just a nice living. Paid all the bills. Once a month, Lenny's brother in law would stop in to chew the fat and hit Lenny for a hundred bucks. Lenny called it his happy house insurance. Lenny's wife was bitchy enough without her brother stirring the pot, and Lenny could afford the hundred bucks.

PARKER
Is this going somewhere?

ROGER
One month, the brother in law wants another hundred. Now, Lenny is over the barrel.
(MORE)

ROGER (CONT'D)

Two hundred is more than he's willing to pay, but he still has to keep the bitch happy. What does he do? Lenny waits till his wife visits her cousin in New York. Then, he invites the brother in law over and feeds him more alcohol than should be allowed. Lenny helps his b-in-law up the stairs to a bedroom where he can sleep it off. Only the b-in-law never makes it. He rolls down the stairs, snaps his neck, and Lenny calls 911.

PARKER

How did you catch Lenny?

ROGER

Oh, I didn't catch him. He got away with it, but that's not the point. The point is the b-in-law would have lived if he hadn't squeezed a little harder. I don't squeeze, Parker. I don't squeeze.

INT. JAYDEN MABURY OFFICE - DAY

Jayden, shirt and suspenders, plays with a gold pen. Across from him, Claire smiles.

JAYDEN

You didn't have to come to my office. You could have filed with the court.

CLAIRE

I wanted to make sure I was doing the right thing. And I wanted to meet whoever was handling the estate.

JAYDEN

What you really want to know is if the new owner will continue the mountain cabin project.

CLAIRE

There is that. And I have some precious little items that would turn the cabin into the bomb.

JAYDEN

Do people still say the 'bomb'?

CLAIRE

We're talking about antiques. The 'bomb' is appropriate.

JAYDEN

Look, I have no idea what the new owner plans to do with the cabin. I understand your desire to know--

CLAIRE

For planning purposes.

JAYDEN

For planning, yes. But I can't help you.

CLAIRE

Can you tell me who the new owner is?

JAYDEN

Jaxi's daughter, Anne, inherits.

CLAIRE

The one from California?

JAYDEN

Jaxi's only daughter, yes.

CLAIRE

I don't suppose...

JAYDEN

No, I can't give out her contact information. You'll have to wait on that.

Claire frowns.

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll contact Anne and ask if she wants to see you. I'll tell you her answer...over dinner.

CLAIRE

Dinner. What if I told you I was married?

JAYDEN

Then, I'd have to eat two dinners.

CLAIRE
Or involved.

JAYDEN
And a second dessert.

CLAIRE
Or that I prefer women.

JAYDEN
A whole bottle of wine.

She laughs.

CLAIRE
I'm warning you now. I like steak,
a lot of steak.

JAYDEN
Perfect.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Graham lights his marijuana pipe and takes a hit. Closing his eyes, he savors the smoke, mellow.

Until a pillow hits him in the head.

He drops his pipe and bolts up.

GRAHAM
What the hell!

Across the room stands Parker.

PARKER
Better get that before it starts a
fire.

Graham scrambles for his pipe.

GRAHAM
What are you doing here?

PARKER
Shopping.

GRAHAM
Shopping? For what, weed?

Graham laughs.

PARKER
Truth. I'm looking for the truth.

Graham offers the pipe.

GRAHAM
This is as true as it gets, bro.

Parker takes the pipe, looks at it a moment, and then hurls it against the wall where it shatters.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

Graham scrambles off the bed and grabs the burning weed, jerking back his fingers at the heat.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Are you fucking crazy?

Parker goes around the bed, grabs Graham's baggy of weed.

PARKER
The truth shall set you free.
Isn't that what grandma used to say?

Graham notices Parker and jumps to his feet, chasing Parker.

GRAHAM
Hey, that's mine!

Parker turns and holds the baggy at arm's length.

PARKER
You believe in Socialism?

GRAHAM
What? Gimme my stuff.

PARKER
I think you believe in socialism.

GRAHAM
You're crazy.

Graham reaches for the baggy, but Parker holds him off.

PARKER
You know, what's yours is mine,
what's mine is yours. You believe
that, right?

GRAHAM
Don't, Parker, don't.

PARKER
That's why you robbed me. Because
you believe in socialism.
Everybody owns everything.

Graham pauses, his eyes narrowing.

GRAHAM
I never robbed no one.

PARKER
The glass, Graham, you messed up on
the glass.

Graham frowns, not understanding.

PARKER (CONT'D)
When you broke out the window, you
were inside not outside. The glass
fell the wrong way.

GRAHAM
You're messed up. It wasn't me.

PARKER
Of course, it was you. No one else
has a key.
(smells the baggy)
No one else needs the money.

GRAHAM
I swear, I swear it wasn't me. I
could never steal from you.

PARKER
Graham, don't add lying to your
list of sins. It was you. Admit
it and I'll give you back the love
of your life.

Graham bites his lip, looking from Parker to the baggy.

PARKER (CONT'D)
Shall set you free.

GRAHAM
I was sick, sick, and grandma
wouldn't give me anything. You
don't know how bad it can get. You
don't know. I couldn't think of
anything else.
(MORE)

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

And I'm going to pay you back. I swear I'll pay you back no matter how long it takes.

Parker gently slaps Graham with the baggy.

PARKER

See, that wasn't so hard, was it.

Parker grabs Graham and puts him in a headlock. He slaps Graham with the baggy, harder and harder.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You fucking sonofabitch! You fucking junky! You think you can rip me off and then say 'sorry man.'

Parker jams the baggy into Graham's mouth.

PARKER (CONT'D)

This shit means so much you rob your fucking BROTHER?!

He balls his fist and punches Graham hard.

PARKER (CONT'D)

YOU STEAL FROM ME?!

Blood runs out Graham's nose as Parker sends him to the carpet.

PARKER (CONT'D)

I should kill you.

He buries his knee in Graham's gut, and the baggy goes flying. Graham flops like a fish.

PARKER (CONT'D)

But not before you pay me every fucking dime you owe me. Do you understand?

Graham can't talk, but he can nod, vigorously.

PARKER (CONT'D)

First, you're gonna tell me where you sold my stuff, one item in particular. What did you do with the tea chest?

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Francois sprays polish on the tea chest and sets to polishing as Claire enters.

CLAIRE
Who called?

FRANCOIS
The first lady, she wants you to redo the White House.

CLAIRE
Right. Right after the queen requested a quote for Buckingham Palace.

FRANCOIS
How did you know?

CLAIRE
Tell them I can't take the job. I'm busy with the Taj Mahal.

Francois laughs.

FRANCOIS
I'll go with you on that trip. Here, look.

He holds out the chest.

CLAIRE
What am I looking at?

He points to some elaborate scroll.

FRANCOIS
Initials.

CLAIRE
Initials?

FRANCOIS
E. T.

CLAIRE
Extra terrestrials drink tea?

FRANCOIS
There are worse things.

CLAIRE
Name two.

She heads past for her office.

FRANCOIS
The cabin?

CLAIRE
I'm having dinner with Jaxi's
attorney.

FRANCOIS
Is that good or bad?

CLAIRE
Yes.

She disappears, and he polishes the chest.

FRANCOIS
E. T. phone home.

INT. PARKER'S CAR - EVENING

Parker drives. Graham holds a bloody napkin to his nose.

PARKER
Think, asshole, think. Where did
you dump it?

GRAHAM
I don't remember. Some place way
out where no one would know shit.

They roll a lonely country road. Trailers and chicken farms.

PARKER
You better hope we find it, or I'll
leave your ass in some swamp.

GRAHAM
It's not far--I think. Shit, all
these places look alike.

Ahead to one side sits Molly's Antiques.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
There, there, that's it.

PARKER
You sure?

GRAHAM
Yeah, I remember.

PARKER
Like the last place you remembered?

GRAHAM
No, this is the one.

They pull into the parking lot.

PARKER
You better be right.

INT. MOLLY'S ANTIQUES - EVENING

Molly stands behind the counter, facing Parker. Graham roams the store.

MOLLY
I'm afraid I don't remember doing business with your brother.

PARKER
Are you sure? He seems to think you bought some items from him.

MOLLY
He must be mistaken. I'm about to close.

PARKER
He could be wrong. He may have been under the influence of drugs at the time.

MOLLY
I'm sure I know nothing about that.

GRAHAM
Yo, Parker.

Parker turns to where Graham holds up small, antique lamp.

PARKER
(to Molly)
Can you tell me where you got that?

MOLLY
I don't remember. I've had it a long time.

PARKER
I don't think so, Molly. You see, that was my father's before it became mine.

MOLLY

I'm sure you're mistaken. One lamp looks much like another

Graham walks to the counter, lamp in hand.

PARKER

Look, I'm not going to cause any trouble because you bought stolen goods. I don't even care about the lamp. You can keep it. What I'm interested in is an old tea chest, an ornately carved, antique tea chest. Remember that?

Molly shakes her head.

MOLLY

I have to ask you to leave.

PARKER

No, Molly, I don't think we can do that.

Parker turns to Graham who shrugs. Then, quick as a snake, Parker backhands Molly.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Jayden and Claire occupy a table with a view of the ocean. Drinks in front of them, they're too for jitters.

JAYDEN

If you're from the south, you understand family. Sons follow fathers as surely as the tide ebbs and flows.

CLAIRE

I'm a Yankee. I escaped snow and family. Some daughters don't follow.

JAYDEN

I commend you. Few people manage to escape their heritage. So, tell me, how did you escape getting married?

CLAIRE

Are you certain I did?

INT. INNER SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Francois studies the carving on the tea chest. He opens an atlas and pages through.

JAYDEN (V.O.)

I'm not entirely sure, but you don't strike me as a bitter divorcee or a happy divorcee for that matter. Let me guess, you got engaged once but ended it before you walked down the aisle.

Francois stops at a page and compares the map to the chest. He tilts the page to and fro, trying to match the images.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

It wasn't that simple. We were engaged twice. The first time, he walked out. The second time, I did. Growing older is mandatory, growing up is an option. How many times were you engaged?

Francois lays down the atlas and taps the page. He found what he was looking for.

INT. MOLLY'S ANTIQUES - CONTINUOUS

Molly is tied to a chair. Graham smiles and slaps her very hard.

In the background, Parker rifles Molly's files.

JAYDEN (V.O.)

Never popped the question. Oh, I had chances. My parents pushed me toward this cute little blonde whose father owned a string of turkey farms. Did you know that turkey feet are a delicacy in Asia?

Graham slaps Molly again as she begins to cry.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

I had no idea. Didn't like the idea of being the turkey king?

JAYDEN (V.O.)

Didn't like the idea of her cheating on me. I'm guessing it would have taken a few years, but she was going to cheat.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
How did you know that?

Parker reads Molly's sales ledger as Graham punches her.

JAYDEN (V.O.)
She cheated at golf.

Parker tosses aside a ledger in disgust. He grabs a stack of business cards.

Graham holds Molly's hair in one hand while he hits her with the other.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
Once a cheater...

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Claire and Jayden at the table.

JAYDEN
Always a cheater.

CLAIRE
Remind me not to play golf with you.

JAYDEN
Do you enjoy sailing?

INT. MOLLY'S ANTIQUES - CONTINUOUS

Parker comes around the counter as Graham steps back from Molly whose face is a bloody mess.

PARKER
What the hell did you do?

GRAHAM
She wouldn't talk.

PARKER
Shit.

Parker backhands Graham.

PARKER (CONT'D)
Are you an idiot? Of course you are.

Graham rubs his face and glares.

EXT. MOLLY'S ANTIQUES - EVENING

Parker and Graham walk to the car and climb in. Behind them, flames light up the interior of the store. They rip away as the flames grow.

EXT. INNER SPACE - EVENING

Francois locks the door. Under his arm is the tea chest. He turns and strides away.

INT. PARKER'S CAR - NIGHT

Parker drives as Graham reads through the business cards Parker took from Molly's. The ones he doesn't like he tosses out the window. Graham's hands shake.

PARKER

How many?

GRAHAM

Five. How we gonna do them?

PARKER

Alphabetical order, unless you can think of a better way.

GRAHAM

You got anything in the car?

PARKER

Anything?

GRAHAM

It's getting bad.

PARKER

I don't do drugs.

GRAHAM

Yeah, but it's getting bad.

PARKER

There might be some candy in the box.

Graham opens the glove box and rifles until he finds a candy bar. He tears it open and eats.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Give me one good reason to keep you around.

GRAHAM

I know where she put the doubloon.

PARKER

You're lying. If you knew, you'd have it.

GRAHAM

I didn't say it would be easy to get. I just know where it is.

PARKER

If you're lying, I swear I'll rip out your tongue and make you eat it.

Graham regards his bruised hands.

GRAHAM

I want part of it.

PARKER

Don't squeeze me, bro, don't squeeze.

INT. JAYDEN'S HOUSE - LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LAURA, 40, attractive, sits in bed, reading an iPad. The door opens, and Jayden sticks in his head.

JAYDEN

Sorry I'm late. How was your night?

LAURA

Uneventful. How was yours?

JAYDEN

Same. Can I get you anything?

LAURA

No, I'm fine. Good night, Jayden.

JAYDEN

Good night.

He backs out as she returns to reading.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Graham enters and stops short.

On the bed, Anne smokes a marijuana pipe. She smiles, high.

ANNE
This isn't bad shit, but we got a
lot better on the coast.

GRAHAM
Yeah, well, that's my shit, mom.

ANNE
There's enough for both of us.
(pats the bed)
Join mommy.

Graham stares.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Don't be that way. No one likes to
smoke alone.

GRAHAM
I do.

ANNE
Like living here?

Graham smiles and comes to the bed.

ANNE (CONT'D)
That's mommy's baby.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Francois reads his computer as Claire emerges from the back room.

CLAIRE
What are you doing this afternoon?

FRANCOIS
Huh?

CLAIRE
This afternoon, Frenchy, what are
you doing?

FRANCOIS
Nothing important why?

CLAIRE
I need you to take the Kidd
appointment.

FRANCOIS
I thought she was your special
friend.

CLAIRE
I have something better to do.

FRANCOIS
Oh, what?

CLAIRE
The briny.

INT. EMILY'S BARN - DAY

A large barn converted into a decorating center. Fabrics, paints, antiques, art, surround a round business kiosk. In the center stands EMILY, 60, silver hair, lots of jewelry, and a southern drawl.

EMILY
I'm not sure I fully comprehend
what you're looking for.

Parker wanders through the displays, pausing here and there to look at something.

PARKER
A tea chest, an old tea chest. I
saw a picture of one online, and I
guess the only way to describe it
is to say it's intricately carved.
Ever run across anything like that?

EMILY
I must admit I have never seen
anything quite like that. Is your
heart set on it? Because I have
some very nice pieces that might
suit your needs.

PARKER
I'm afraid my heart is set.

EMILY
Sugar, hearts are unset all the
time.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - DAY

Parker smiles at a very young, black WOMAN, in a shop devoted to African primitives. Nope, this is not the store he's looking for.

EXT. SAILBOAT - DAY

Claire leans over the side and lets her fingers brush the water as the boat leans. At the helm, Jayden smiles at the wind and sun. A beautiful day to be on the water.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Graham wakes, groggy from the drugs. He looks around, and he's alone. Then, he looks under the covers. He's naked.

GRAHAM

Fuck.

He falls back against the pillows and grabs his head.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

FUCK!

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Parker stands by his car and rips a business card in half, letting the wind whip the halves away.

EXT. SAILBOAT - DAY

The boat sits anchored in a small bay. Out of the water climbs Claire, fetching in her bikini, dripping wet. As she comes aboard, Jayden follows, well-knit.

Claire doesn't bother with a towel but lies down in the sun. Jayden finds a seat and stretches.

CLAIRE

Don't block the sun.

He moves so his shadow doesn't cover her.

JAYDEN

Did you see the shark?

CLAIRE

Yes, you swim well.

JAYDEN
Funny. A lawyer joke?

CLAIRE
All lawyers are jokes, right?

JAYDEN
The salt air must have eaten your
brain.

CLAIRE
Tell me a story.

JAYDEN
What?

CLAIRE
A story, southern men know all
sorts of stories, don't they?

JAYDEN
You've read too much Faulkner.

CLAIRE
Maybe you haven't read enough.

He looks out over the ocean and then at her.

JAYDEN
Ever hear of the commodore?

CLAIRE
Weren't they a musical group?

JAYDEN
That was the commodores, and no
this isn't about them. Cornelius
Vanderbilt was called the commodore
because he owned ships, lots of
ships. He also owned railroads,
lots of railroads. He lived in New
York. He had kids, and one of them
wanted a summer retreat.

CLAIRE
Which one?

JAYDEN
Is this your story or mine?

CLAIRE
Carry on.

JAYDEN

George Washington Vanderbilt bought land around Asheville and built Biltmore, one of the largest residences ever conceived. In order to supply it, he built a railroad spur. It took six years and lots of cash, but he made the estate a money making venture. The estate bred cows and had a dairy. All the people around Asheville drank Biltmore milk.

CLAIRE

You're descended from George?

JAYDEN

Don't we wish. No, my connection to Biltmore came through my great-grandfather who ran the dairy. He was responsible for getting the milk to all those kiddies.

CLAIRE

Do southern tales ever get to the point?

JAYDEN

Every Christmas, the Vanderbilts would call all the employees to the great house for a party and the passing out of bonuses. It was the one time a year the servants got to eat and drink in the great hall. My grandfather would wear his only suit and drink the finest scotch he had ever tasted. The bonus cash paid for Christmas for the whole family.

CLAIRE

Wake me when you get to the good part.

JAYDEN

After one party, as my grandfather was walking home, cash in his pocket, scotch in his belly, he was jumped by two thugs. He put up a good fight, but he didn't have a chance. They left him with a handful of plaid jacket and a big lump on his head. He was lucky to be alive.

(MORE)

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

A lot of men would have nursed their wounds and written off the money. My great-grandfather was not a lot of men.

Claire rolls over to look at Jayden.

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

He searched the highs and lows for two days before he found the man with part of his jacket missing. He took the man behind the bar and beat the bejesus out of him. That was almost half the money. He walked a mile out of town to confront the other thug. Great-grandfather didn't have to beat the second guy, just threaten. In all, he retrieved almost all the bonus.

CLAIRE

You're like your great-grandfather?

He holds up one finger.

JAYDEN

When he reached his house, he found George Washington in the living room. You see, GW had heard about the mugging, and he couldn't stand the thought of his dairy manager going without Christmas. So, GW handed over a second envelope with even more money than the first. Now, another man might have kept the second bonus, another man. My great-grandfather handed it back, explaining how he didn't deserve it. GW wouldn't take it back. The double bonus was even more deserved since my great-grandfather had bested the pirates. That's what GW called the thugs, pirates.

CLAIRE

Does this story have an ending?

JAYDEN

Whenever I had a problem at school, you know, a problem with a bully, my grandfather would tell me that pirates understood only one thing—a punch in the nose.

(MORE)

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

He said that piece of advice came straight from the V's.

CLAIRE

I take it you don't like pirates.

JAYDEN

You asked for a story.

CLAIRE

Yes, and now, I'm ready for steak.

JAYDEN

Not lobster?

CLAIRE

Lobster makes me sick.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Parker stands at the counter, smiling at Francois.

PARKER

So, you see, finding this tea chest is important to me. My grandmother had one for years.

FRANCOIS

But of course, and I assure you we will look everywhere for this chest special.

PARKER

I'll make it worth your while.

Francois grins.

FRANCOIS

Then, I will search both night and day.

PARKER

I sorta hoped I'd get to speak with Miss Claire.

FRANCOIS

Ah, me, there is nothing I would like better, but she is not in the city today. Do you wish her to perhaps call?

PARKER
That's not necessary. I'll come
back.

Parker makes a little wave and heads out. Francois' smile
dissipates.

EXT. JAXI'S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

In a bikini, Anne tans under a hot sun.

From the house comes Graham, shorts and tee. He stops by
Anne, his shadow falling over her.

ANNE
Don't block the sun.

GRAHAM
I want you to go home.

ANNE
I am home.

GRAHAM
Your California home.

ANNE
Don't be that way. I'm not ready
to leave.

GRAHAM
I'm not going to feed your habits.
Do you understand? It won't be
like last time.

ANNE
Darling, last night was just last
night.

(removes glasses and
glares)
If you know what's good for you,
you won't test me. If I want
something from you, I'll have it.
Do YOU understand?

(replaces glasses)
Now, move out of my sun.

Graham steps back.

GRAHAM
I want the doubloon.

ANNE
Don't be absurd.

GRAHAM
I'm telling you now, so it won't be
surprise. I want the doubloon.

With that, he whirls and marches back to the house.

INT. JAYDEN'S CAR - NIGHT

Claire and Jayden sit outside Claire's Victorian style house.

JAYDEN
Want me to come in?

CLAIRE
Not tonight.

JAYDEN
Ever?

CLAIRE
Ever is a long time.

He takes her hand.

JAYDEN
I like you. I want to keep dating.

CLAIRE
Like is a good place to start,
isn't it?

JAYDEN
The best place.

She leans across, kisses his cheek, and climbs out. He
watches her all the way inside.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Parker opens the front door, and Graham walks past, duffle in
hand.

GRAHAM
I can't stay with her.

PARKER
How bad is it?

GRAHAM
You don't want to know.

PARKER
We have to do something.

GRAHAM
What, what can we do? She's our mother.

PARKER
No mother would do what she did.

Graham turns for the stairs.

GRAHAM
Guest room?

PARKER
No drugs, Graham, nada. I'll send you back.

GRAHAM
I'm clean, bro, I'm clean.

PARKER
Stay that way.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Francois tapes a poster-sized map of an island on a wall. The map is geographical quality with topographical lines. He steps back to admire his handiwork before he turns to the table where the tea chest waits.

He traces the carving on the chest and studies the map. Grabbing a marker, he steps to the map and marks in +'s, a long line of marks.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Francois' map lies atop a table. Next to it sits the tea chest.

Francois taps the series of +'s.

FRANCOIS
Look at it, Claire, look carefully.

Claire runs her finger over the carving on the chest.

CLAIRE
It's decoration.

FRANCOIS
I thought so too, until I combined
it with the initials.

CLAIRE
Extra-terrestrial?

FRANCOIS
Edward Teach.

CLAIRE
Who was Edward Teach?

FRANCOIS
Don't laugh.

CLAIRE
That's the least of your worries.

FRANCOIS
Blackbeard.

CLAIRE
Blackbeard?

FRANCOIS
The pirate Blackbeard.

CLAIRE
I'm sure this is going somewhere.

FRANCOIS
I did some research.

CLAIRE
Thank god for google.

FRANCOIS
Edward Teach was the pirate
Blackbeard. He marauded here, just
off the Carolinas. He sold his
booty to the communities along the
coast. His ship, Queen Anne's
Revenge was recovered not fifty
miles from here. This place is
full of Blackbeard legend.

CLAIRE
And you think the tea chest
belonged to Blackbeard?

FRANCOIS

Yes, no, I don't know. What do you know about the chest's origins?

CLAIRE

Nothing.

FRANCOIS

Some guy came in yesterday, claiming a chest like once belonged to his grandmother. Someone stole it, and he's looking for a replacement.

CLAIRE

Is his name Teach?

FRANCOIS

No, but that doesn't mean anything.

She frowns.

FRANCOIS (CONT'D)

It's not just the initials, it's the carving, the map.

CLAIRE

You see a map. I see a bunch of squiggly lines.

FRANCOIS

It's an island, Claire. Oh, I admit the match isn't perfect. Things change over centuries. Islands change. But it's there, it's there. Trust me, it's all there.

CLAIRE

Or it's some clever Chinese knockoff made to look like an antique.

FRANCOIS

I'm going to the island..

He rolls up the map.

CLAIRE

Don't be stupid, Frenchy. Work out the history before you jump in a boat with a shovel and a bunch of marks on a map.

FRANCOIS
 Blackbeard's treasure has never
 been found. Have any idea what it
 would be worth?

CLAIRE
 Fool's gold, fool's gold. Treasure
 hunts waste a lot of money and
 time.

FRANCOIS
 You don't get opportunities like
 this every day.

They are at loggerheads. Neither wants to give in.

CLAIRE
 Before you ask for two months of
 vacation, let me do some research.

FRANCOIS
 How do you propose to do that?

CLAIRE
 I'll talk to the people who once
 had a chest like this.

FRANCOIS
 Without giving away the farm?

CLAIRE
 This isn't my first regatta.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Claire and Parker eat lunch under bright sunshine. A nice
 little café.

CLAIRE
 I am sorry I missed you yesterday.

PARKER
 I'm glad you called. It's not
 often I get to lunch with a
 beautiful woman.

CLAIRE
 I doubt that.

PARKER
 You'd be surprised. Now, tell me
 what you know about tea chests.

CLAIRE
Nothing, actually. I mean,
Francois described it to me, and
I'd love to go to work looking for
the one you want. I need all the
clients I can get.

He sips beer as a WAITRESS arrives with plates of food.

PARKER
I see. How would you go about
looking for it?

CLAIRE
Decorators are networked. I put
out a query, and suddenly, you have
a thousand people looking for your
tea chest.

PARKER
It's not like my name is on it.

CLAIRE
That's just it. What can you tell
me about this chest? How did you
acquire it in the first place?

PARKER
It's a long story.

CLAIRE
It's a nice afternoon.

PARKER
Here's what I know, what's been
passed down in the family. My
grandfather found a sealed metal
container at the bottom of the
sound off Topsail Island.
Supposedly, he was trying to
retrieve a lost fishing reel.
Anyway, he opened the container and
found the chest.

CLAIRE
Nothing more?

PARKER
Just the chest. In the chest were
some old tea leaves and something
you would never guess.

CLAIRE
I'm pretty good at guessing.

PARKER
Under the leaves was a gold
doubloon.

CLAIRE
What?

PARKER
Gold, a pure gold doubloon,
something from a Spanish galleon—or
so granddad always said.

CLAIRE
You still have it?

PARKER
Yes, my mother inherited it.

CLAIRE
That's quite a story.

PARKER
If my grandmother were still alive,
she would explain it better.

CLAIRE
I can see why you want a chest.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Graham enters and goes straight to the bed. He pushes aside the mattress, pulls up the box springs cover, and pulls out a carefully cut patch. He reaches into the box springs and removes a bag of marijuana.

ANNE (O.S.)
So, that's where you hide it.

He turns to her. In shorts, tee, and sunglasses, she's mostly hippie.

GRAHAM
You're not getting any.

ANNE
Where were you last night?

GRAHAM
I'm not coming back.

She moves closer, reaching out to touch his arm.

ANNE
 That's all right. I understand.
 You don't have to come back. But
 before you leave, fix me a pipe.

He literally shivers at her touch.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 We both know you want to share one
 with me. Do it.

EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY

Parker and Claire stand beside her car.

PARKER
 Thank you for a very pleasant
 lunch.

CLAIRE
 You picked up the check, thank you.

PARKER
 So, how about I pick up the tab for
 dinner?

She smiles and slides into her car.

CLAIRE
 I think I'd like that. She hands
 him her card. Call me.

He watches her pull away, and his smile morphs into a frown.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Lying on a couch, Anne takes a hit on a marijuana pipe and
 hands it to Graham who lies on the floor.

ANNE
 Did you miss mommy?

Graham doesn't answer.

ANNE (CONT'D)
 I know you did. You showed that
 last night.

GRAHAM
 I want the doubloon.

ANNE
What do I get for it?

GRAHAM
Nothing.

ANNE
Silly boy, you were always so
silly. You never wanted what was
good for you.

GRAHAM
I'm not a boy any more.

ANNE
And I like that.

She laughs.

INT. JAYDEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jayden adds a rose bud in a vase to a tray holding a salad
and a glass of tea. He smiles as he picks up the tray.

INT. JAYDEN'S HOUSE - LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens, and Jayden enters with the tray. In bed,
Laura brightens.

JAYDEN
I hope you're hungry.

LAURA
What did you fix me?

JAYDEN
Your favorite, walnuts and spinach.

LAURA
With ranch?

JAYDEN
Of course.

He sets the tray in front of her and watches as she spreads a
napkin and picks up a fork.

LAURA
Are you going out tonight?

JAYDEN
No.

LAURA
Will you read me a story?

JAYDEN
Which one do you want?

LAURA
Treasure Island.

JAYDEN
We've read it before.

LAURA
I like Long John Silver.

JAYDEN
Treasure Island it is.

She smiles prettily and eats.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Graham stumbles into the room, more than a bit drugged. He reaches the bed and falls across it. He's almost out.

Behind him comes Anne, not so bombed out. She smiles and unbuttons her shirt.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Parker sips a beer and studies the card he received from Claire. He taps the card on his lip.

INT. INNER SPACE - NIGHT

Darkness for a second until the door glass shatters. No alarm. A hand reaches in and unlocks the door. Into the store slips Parker, dressed in black. He produces a flashlight and flicks it on.

He moves carefully among the various items, careful not to disturb anything. The beam dances over antiques and displays. He moves around the counter and searches. The beam finds Francois' folded map.

Parker unfolds the map and studies it. He taps the flashlight on the map as if making sure it's what he thinks it is. Then, he carefully refolds the map and replaces it.

INT. DINER - MORNING

A small diner with all the smells and sounds of a popular breakfast place. In a booth, Claire and Jayden sip coffee, the remains of breakfast still on the table.

JAYDEN
Your turn.

CLAIRE
My turn?

JAYDEN
To tell a story.

CLAIRE
I have no stories.

JAYDEN
Everyone has stories. Tell me one, a good one.

CLAIRE
When I was in high school, I wanted to be a dancer.

JAYDEN
A ballerina?

CLAIRE
Rockettes, and it's my story.

JAYDEN
Right.

CLAIRE
I loved to dance, and I was good at it. I did ballet, but my heart was in modern dance. And the rockettes always seemed so together, so precise. I liked that. So, I pestered my father to take me to New York and see a show. I had to pester because my parents didn't have oodles of money.

She sips coffee to buy time perhaps.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
He saved some money and took me to New York for the Christmas show. You can imagine a high school newbie in New York. Everything seemed larger than life.
(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

The buildings, the bustle, the crowds, even the hotel room which was really tiny now that I remember it. Anyway, we gawked for a day and then went to the show.

JAYDEN

And you were disappointed?

CLAIRE

No, no, not at all. They were spectacular, magnificent. Their routines were flawless. Their costumes were perfect. They performed better than anyone I had ever seen. That was the problem.

JAYDEN

They performed too well?

CLAIRE

Yes, they were so much better than me that I wanted to cry. Have you ever had a dream crushed because you suddenly realize you will never be good enough?

JAYDEN

I was going to pitch in the world series.

CLAIRE

Exactly. A dream that can't come true. Not ever. That happened to me. I watched and knew, just knew I would never be that good. It was disheartening.

JAYDEN

I'm sorry you lost your dream.

CLAIRE

Don't be. The Rockettes did me a favor. My father did me a favor although he thought he had broken my heart. You see, if he hadn't taken me, if I hadn't seen them perform, I would have held onto that dream for the rest of high school and probably college. Who knows how many hours I would have wasted on something that couldn't happen.

(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Who knows what sort of doors I would have closed in order to keep that impossible door open. No, my father did me a tremendous favor. Reality made me cry for a week or two, but that was far better than chasing the unicorn.

JAYDEN

You don't chase unicorns?

CLAIRE

I chase things I can catch.

JAYDEN

So do I.

INT. PARKER'S CAR - DAY

Parker sits inside his car. Down the street is the diner. As he watches, Jayden and Claire walk out. They chat a moment before they go their separate ways.

Parker shakes his head from side to side, trying to figure out the relationship. He grabs his phone and dials.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Graham wakes, a blanket over him. He doesn't have to lift the blanket to see that he's naked. He knows.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Francois uses duct tape to seal cardboard over the missing glass in the door. Even as he finishes, the door swings open, hitting him in the forehead.

FRANCOIS

What the hell.

Claire enters and stoops.

CLAIRE

You ok?

FRANCOIS

Just feeling stupid.

CLAIRE

What did they take?

FRANCOIS
Nothing.

CLAIRE
Are you sure?

FRANCOIS
Not even a swatch.

She looks around. Nothing is disturbed.

CLAIRE
They didn't come in?

FRANCOIS
Perhaps not. Maybe they got scared
off.

CLAIRE
I guess we should be thankful.

FRANCOIS
Your new admirer called.

CLAIRE
I have a new admirer?

FRANCOIS
Parker. He was pretty hot to talk
to you.

CLAIRE
Why do things always come in
bunches?

FRANCOIS
Because fate likes to tease you. I
was reading about Edward Teach last
night.

CLAIRE
And he didn't drink tea, right?

FRANCOIS
Everyone drank tea, and rum. I
read where he hinted many times
that he had a treasure trove hidden
away.

CLAIRE
Right under our noses.

FRANCOIS
I want to explore the island.

CLAIRE
Go ahead, but you won't find anything.

FRANCOIS
How do you know that?

CLAIRE
It's the wrong dream, Frenchy, the wrong dream.

FRANCOIS
Want to come with me?

CLAIRE
It's your wrong dream, not mine.

FRANCOIS
Enough said, but I'll still share the treasure with you. You're the one who found the chest.

CLAIRE
Half of zero is, let me see, oh, zero.

FRANCOIS
Mock me now, praise me later.

CLAIRE
Yeah, right.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Graham, in shorts and tee, enters this plush room, a room fit for a mansion. He carries with him several lengths of rope.

In the bed sleeps Anne. He pauses by the bed to study her a moment. Then, he whips her form with a rope.

GRAHAM
Wake up.

She stirs.

ANNE
Go away.

GRAHAM
Wake up.

He whips her several times, until she comes awake.

ANNE
Stop that. I'm awake.

GRAHAM
It's time.

She looks him up and down, noticing the ropes.

ANNE
Are you sure?

GRAHAM
It's what you want, isn't it?

ANNE
What if it is?

GRAHAM
Then, you're going to like it.

ANNE
You remember, don't you? You remember, and you want it.

GRAHAM
I think we both want it.

She smiles, a wicked salacious smile.

ANNE
Yessssssssssss.

He places the ropes on the bed and then jumps on top, landing on his back. He stretches his arms even as she picks up a rope.

GRAHAM
Good and tight.

ANNE
The only way.

She knots the rope around his wrist and jerks his arm hard before she ties the rope to the headboard.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

A small motorboat pushes through the chop under a brilliant sky.

INT. MOTORBOAT - CONTINUOUS

Francois steers. On the console before him lies his map. He grins with anticipation.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Claire stands in the middle of the room, looking all around. Parker enters with two lemonades and hands one to her.

PARKER

I want to redo this room in a more nautical theme. You know, boats, flags, compass, ships wheel. Maybe red and green lamps.

CLAIRE

I'm not sure this room is right for an ocean theme. Perhaps your den would be more appropriate.

PARKER

You may be right. Start small? Of course, I'm in the planning stage until I get a check from Jayden.

CLAIRE

Jayden Mabury?

PARKER

He's handling my grandmother's estate. She included me in the will.

CLAIRE

Jaxi was your grandmother?

PARKER

Did you know her?

CLAIRE

I was redoing the mountain cabin.

PARKER

So you know Jayden.

CLAIRE

The estate owes me.

PARKER

Me too. You've met Laura?

CLAIRE

Laura?

PARKER

Jayden's wife. Grandmother always got a Christmas card from Jayden and Laura.

Claire's face shows the pain she feels.

CLAIRE

No, no, we've never met.

PARKER

Not that it matters. So, what do you think, den first?

CLAIRE

Definitely den.

EXT. ISLAND - DAY

Francois' motorboat rocks gently, moored just off the beach. Wearing a backpack and holding a small shovel, Francois slides over the side and wades to the beach.

On the sand, Francois produces a GPS device and checks his position. Nodding, he turns left and walks.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Graham looks into the mirror. He studies the rope burns on his wrists and the whip welts on his chest. He's taken some punishment. He touches a welt and winces. It's real.

INT JAXI'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Anne, in bra and panties, emerges from the bathroom, stops, and smiles.

In the doorway stands Graham, bruised and beaten.

ANNE

More?

He crosses as anticipation ripples through her. She works to look sexy.

He stops in front of her. She reaches out to touch a welt on his chest.

As quick as a cat, he punches her in the face, knocking her to the carpet.

He jumps atop her and pins her arms. He wraps his hands around her neck and squeezes.

GRAHAM
Where is the doubloon?

Blood runs out her nose. Tears out her eyes.

He squeezes harder.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Where?

EXT ISLAND DUNE - DAY

Francois stands atop a dune. He consults his map in one hand and his GPS device in the other. He slings off his backpack and glances at the sun. He grabs the shovel and digs.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Parker sips lemonade and looks across the table where Claire scribbles on a her clipboard.

CLAIRE
This is very rough, but it will give you some idea of the scope.

She tears off a sheet and hands it to him.

PARKER
Do-overs aren't cheap, are they?

CLAIRE
Not if you do it right.

PARKER
OK, let's take this to the next level. You do drawings, plans?

CLAIRE
Certainly, I'll work up a vision. I use software that can simulate what we're talking about.

PARKER
Excellent, we'll talk about it over dinner.

She studies him, wondering.

PARKER (CONT'D)
Yes, I do want to get to know you better.

CLAIRE
I generally don't date clients.

PARKER
Make an exception.

CLAIRE
I think I might.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Graham grips Anne's hair and steers her into the room. Her bra gone, blood stains her chest. Her nose swollen, under his control, she looks scared.

He marches her across the room to a painting of a ship under full sail.

GRAHAM
Open it.

She swings away the painting to expose a safe.

ANNE
I don't have the combination.

Her jerks back her head, and grabs her broken nose, and twists. She HOWLS.

GRAHAM
Don't lie to me.

ANNE
The attorney, the attorney has it.

GRAHAM
Last chance.

ANNE
Please, I can't open it.

GRAHAM
That's too bad.

He jerks her away from the safe. She stumbles and falls, but he doesn't care. He drags her out by her hair.

EXT. SAND DUNE - DAY

Francois stands in a three foot deep hole. He sips water and looks up at the hot sun. He consults his map. Things aren't looking good. He grabs the shovel and goes back to work.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Graham lies on his back in the middle of the bed. Anne straddles him. He holds her wrists behind her back in one hand. His other hand slaps her face. She groans in pain.

GRAHAM

You shouldn't have come back.

ANNE

Please.

His hand slides under the pillow and emerges with a sharp kitchen knife. With vicious strength, he sinks the blade into her.

She SCREAMS.

He twists and jerks out and stabs her again, gutting her. Blood sprays him. He stabs one more time and lets her fall to the side where she gasps and grabs her wounds.

He sits up in bed and looks at his dying mother. Then, he calmly slices open his chest, leaving bleeding slits.

EXT. SAND DUNE - LATER

The sun sits low in the sky. Francois stares into an empty four foot deep hole. Nothing. He spits and shrugs and grabs the shovel. He fills in the hole.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Parker and Claire share a glass of wine. The lighting is subdued, the ambience romantic. Two handsome people sharing a fine dining experience.

His phone rings. He looks at it and notices the caller.

PARKER

Excuse me, my brother.

She turns away as he answer the phone.

PARKER (CONT'D)

What?

He listens for half a minute before he kills the call.

PARKER (CONT'D)

I don't know quite how to put this.
I have to go. That was my brother.
He's at the police station.

CLAIRE

Nothing serious I hope.

PARKER

I don't know. You can find a way
home?

He stands and pulls money from a clip.

CLAIRE

Never mind me. Take care of your
brother.

He drops money on the table and leans down to kiss her cheek.

PARKER

I want a do over.

CLAIRE

You have one. Now, go.

With a last smile, he moves away. She watches and grabs her
wine.

INT. POLICE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Small room with table and two chairs. Jayden sits opposite
Graham.

JAYDEN

You're not yet under arrest, but
that can change. Want to tell me
what happened?

GRAHAM

We were doing drugs, weed.

JAYDEN

With your mother?

GRAHAM

It started a long time ago, when I was a teenager. She had...appetites.

JAYDEN

She had tied you up before?

GRAHAM

Never. That's why I was scared. You have no idea what it's like to be powerless.

JAYDEN

Go on.

GRAHAM

It, it was bad, but I kept telling myself it would end. Until she showed me the knife.

He touches his chest, the wounds.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

When she cut me, I knew she wasn't going to stop. She was...it was the drugs. I managed to get a hand free. We fought and wrestled for the knife. I won. Then, then, I...

He makes a stabbing motion with his hand.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

I didn't think it would kill her. I just wanted to get away.

JAYDEN

I'm not a criminal attorney, and I don't think you need one unless the police arrest you. Is this everything you told the police?

GRAHAM

(nodding)

Can you get me a bottle of water?

JAYDEN

I'll do what I can.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Francois smears cream on the blisters he raised the day before. Digging was painful work.

Claire walks in and pauses at the counter.

CLAIRE
What did you get into?

FRANCOIS
A temporary setback.

CLAIRE
Looks like manual labor.

FRANCOIS
Easy success is no success at all.

CLAIRE
Who said that?

FRANCOIS
Have you read the morning paper?

CLAIRE
Not yet, bad news?

FRANCOIS
Your new client's brother made the front page.

CLAIRE
DUI?

FRANCOIS
Killing. He killed his mother.

CLAIRE
WHAT?

FRANCOIS
The details are sketchy, but she's dead, and he's not.

CLAIRE
They arrested him?

FRANCOIS
Not yet. According to his attorney, Jayden Mabury, it was self-defense.

CLAIRE
Jayden too?

FRANCOIS
It never rains but it pours.

She rolls her eyes and heads for her private office.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Parker pours coffee into Graham's cup. Graham sits at the table, watching the morning news.

PARKER
It's all going to come out, isn't it?

GRAHAM
She scared me.

PARKER
She's done it before.

GRAHAM
She cut me—with a knife.

PARKER
Why did you do it?

GRAHAM
Because you left.

PARKER
Don't throw this off on me. You went back. You knew what she would do.

GRAHAM
You were supposed to protect me.

PARKER
Maybe in the beginning, maybe after the first time, but after that you did it because you liked it. Don't lie. You did it because it felt good. And you killed her because that felt good too. Like that antique shop. You liked it.

Graham merely stares.

PARKER (CONT'D)

I'll tell you this once. Don't like it. Don't get into it. Don't think about it. You might get away with it this time, but you won't again. They'll get you. Give it up.

Parker leaves. Graham smiles.

EXT. ISLAND - DAY

The motorboat bobs by the shore. Francois wades ashore with shovel and backpack and metal detector. He pulls out his GPS, finds his bearings. He puts on gloves and strides off.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Jayden enters. As he approaches the counter, Claire emerges from her office.

JAYDEN

There you are.

CLAIRE

Hello, Jayden.

JAYDEN

What did I do wrong?

CLAIRE

Wrong? I don't think you did anything wrong.

JAYDEN

I must have. You haven't returned my calls.

CLAIRE

I've been busy. You know how it is.

JAYDEN

Too busy to return a call?

CLAIRE

What can I say? Time flies.

He half smiles and nods.

JAYDEN

I get it. You don't want to see me any more. Can I ask why?

CLAIRE

One reason is as good as another, isn't it?

JAYDEN

Look at this as a teachable moment. Perhaps I'll do better next time.

CLAIRE

It's not you, it's me. Good enough?

It's clearly not good enough, but the door opens, and Parker enters. He smiles his way forward.

PARKER

Jayden, what are you doing here?

JAYDEN

I was about to ask you the same question.

PARKER

I hired Claire to redo my townhouse. Your turn.

JAYDEN

Apparently, I have no reason to be here.

(to Claire)

I'll expedite your payment.

Claire nods.

Jayden turns to go, but Parker stops him.

PARKER

I know you and Graham have some sort of sacred bond, but what can you tell me about his predicament?

JAYDEN

The police haven't completed their investigation. Until they do, there's not a lot to do.

PARKER

You believe him?

JAYDEN

It doesn't matter if I believe him. In fact, I'd rather not know the truth. Right now, he's innocent. It's the state's job to prove otherwise. Now, I have a question for you. What do you know about the relationship between your mother and brother?

PARKER

I know what he told me. How true is that?

Parker shrugs.

JAYDEN

Exactly. Just in case, try to remember as much as you can about what he told you and what you saw. It may be important.

Jayden leaves. Parker turns to Claire.

PARKER

He came to discuss your claim against the estate?

CLAIRE

Something like that. I've been working on your project. Would you like to see?

PARKER

That's why I'm here...that and you.

Claire smiles, but she doesn't field the compliment.

EXT. SAND DUNE - DAY

Francois stands knee deep in a hole at the bottom of a tall dune. He sips water and looks out over the water. His hunt is not going well. Hot, sweaty, tired, he picks up his shovel and digs.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Parker walks toward the door, Claire by his side.

PARKER

I love what you've done so far.
Keep going. By the way, had any
luck with the tea chest?

CLAIRE

My searches haven't turned up
anything. It's difficult to find
antique chests with initials.

PARKER

Did I say I wanted one with
initials?

CLAIRE

I thought so. Perhaps I misheard.
Is that what you're looking for?

PARKER

Exactly. I believe one with
initials will prove more valuable.

CLAIRE

More easily dated and identified
for sure.

PARKER

Say, what about dinner tonight?
I'm not sure I want to spend the
evening with my brother if you know
what I mean.

She hesitates.

PARKER (CONT'D)

I promise to get you home by
curfew.

She laughs.

CLAIRE

How can I turn down such an offer?
I'll meet you there.

EXT. MOTORBOAT - LATER

Backpack and shovel fly over the side to join a metal
detector. A weary Francois hoists himself over the side and
lies flat on the deck. For a moment, he can do nothing but
breathe. He pulls himself to his feet and shuffles to the
helm.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Graham sips beer and watches TV as Parker enters.

PARKER
I'll be gone till at least nine.

GRAHAM
They're calling it a reverse
Lolita. What's that?

PARKER
It means you're a boy instead of a
girl.

GRAHAM
Of course I'm a boy, so what?

PARKER
Till nine, remember?

GRAHAM
They're not on my side. Did you
notice that?

PARKER
Stop drinking. And no drugs. You
make a mistake, and they'll crucify
you.

Parker leaves. Graham finishes his beer, goes to the fridge,
and grabs another.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Claire exits the front door and goes to her car. She climbs
in and pulls away.

Across the street, Graham steps from behind a thick tree. He
casually crosses the street, straight for Claire's house.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A window pane in the door shatters. A hand reaches in and
unlocks the door. Graham enters. He flicks a small
flashlight and goes straight to the fridge. He opens the
door and smiles before he plucks out a beer.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Clair and Parker sit under the stars and sip wine. They're having a good time.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Using tracing paper, Francois runs a pen over the intricate etching on the tea chest. He takes the paper and carries it to a table where the island map is stretched flat. He lays the paper next to the map.

One finger on the map, the other on the tracing paper, he moves them simultaneously, carefully comparing the two.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sipping a beer and holding his flashlight, Graham enters the bedroom and looks around. He goes to the bureau, puts down the beer, pulls out the top drawer, and rifles through Claire's panties.

He finds a red thong and smiles before he stuffs it into his pocket.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Parker sits by himself, looking out over the ocean. Claire arrives.

CLAIRE
I'm afraid I have to cut dinner short.

PARKER
What can I do?

CLAIRE
Nothing. There must have been some lobster in the soup.

PARKER
Let me take you home.

CLAIRE
I drove, remember.
(stands)
I'll be fine.

PARKER
Call me when you get home? I
worry.

CLAIRE
I'll text. Good night.

He watches her leave. Then, he pulls out his phone and dials. He listens but there is no answer.

PARKER
Answer your fucking phone.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Graham clumps down the steps, his flashlight wagging back and forth. At the bottom, the light flicks over a sea of antiques, chairs and tables and lamps.

He moves into the antiques, diligently searching for the chest.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Claire's car pulls to the curb. She climbs out and hurries toward the house.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Graham finishes the last corner of the basement and turns toward the stairs. As he does, he hears FOOTSTEPS above his head. He looks up, sets his empty can on a desk, and smiles.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The light flicks on, and Claire enters. She goes to a cabinet, pulls out a pill bottle, and shakes a pill into her hand. She goes to the fridge, grabs a bottle of water, and opens it.

As she takes the pill, she turns. And spots the broken glass on the floor.

Her eyes widen as she understands what's happened.

Graham's flashlight crashes against her head, and she collapses.

He stands above her, flashlight in hand. He looks at her, a greedy smile on his face. He could take advantage of this.

His phone BEEPS.

He pulls it out and looks at the text message.

GET OUT NOW!

He looks from phone to Claire before he spins and leaves.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Eyes closed, Claire leans back on the couch, an ice pack on her head. Francois enters and sits next to her.

FRANCOIS

How bad is it?

CLAIRE

I feel like Qasimodo—the bells, the bells.

FRANCOIS

(chuckling)

The door will last until tomorrow. I doubt he'll be back tonight. Then, again, you can always bunk with me.

CLAIRE

Tomorrow, I want to take an inventory.

FRANCOIS

You keep an inventory of this place?

CLAIRE

I have to know what's here.

FRANCOIS

He couldn't have been here long.

CLAIRE

Why's that?

FRANCOIS

Computer, TV, all your electronics are still here. He didn't ransack the place either.

CLAIRE

What if he wasn't looking for electronics or money?

FRANCOIS
What else is there?

CLAIRE
That's why we'll do the inventory.

FRANCOIS
Want me to stay?

CLAIRE
Can you?

FRANCOIS
Let me run home. I'll be right
back.

CLAIRE
Lock the doors.

FRANCOIS
Try to sleep.

He stands and leaves. Her eyes pop open, and she looks around, before she closes them again.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Graham sits on the couch, sipping a beer. Parker paces.

PARKER
It has to be there.

GRAHAM
It's not. I looked.

PARKER
She knew about the initials. I
never told her that.

GRAHAM
It's not there.

PARKER
It's not in her shop either. Where
is it?

GRAHAM
We'll have to get her to tell us.

Parker stops and wags a finger at Graham.

PARKER

No, no, no, you will not touch her.
Do you understand?

GRAHAM

What, you want to bang her?

PARKER

Stay away from her. I'll think of something.

GRAHAM

You have to be willing to break some rules. Mother taught me that.

PARKER

What mother taught you was sick.
Steer clear of Claire. Understand?

Graham nods.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Francois folds the map and places it in the chest. He adds the tracing paper and closes the chest and tucking it under his arm.

INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Graham stands in front of the bureau, his face in the mirror. He pulls the red thong from his pocket and sniffs it.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Francois enters, chest under his arm. On the couch, Claire sleeps.

He sets down the chest and gently pulls Claire to her feet.

FRANCOIS

You'll feel better in bed.

She MUMBLES as he helps her up the stairs.

EXT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Jayden stands in front of the still ruined door. In the window is a CLOSED sign. Frowning, he turns away.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY

Francois moves through the assortment of antiques. He examines a chair.

FRANCOIS
Louis the sixteenth with a cracked
back leg.

Claire examines the list on her clipboard.

CLAIRE
Got it.

Francois moves to the desk and the beer can.

FRANCOIS
Looks like a shaker desk, oak. And
a beer can.

CLAIRE
Beer can?

FRANCOIS
Definitely, not on your list.

CLAIRE
It shouldn't be down here. I don't
drink beer. Is it empty?

Francois pours out some drops of beer.

FRANCOIS
Nope.

CLAIRE
Shit. Handle with care.

FRANCOIS
What?

CLAIRE
Whoever broke in last night left
it.

FRANCOIS
A burglar who stops to pop one?

JAYDEN (O.S.)
HELLO!

Francois and Claire turn to the stairs as Jayden comes down.

CLAIRE
Jayden, what are you doing here?

JAYDEN
(waves an envelope))
Your payment. The door was
unlocked.
(to Francois)
A little early for a beer, isn't
it?

FRANCOIS
Le Soleil is over the yardarm
somewhere.

Jayden chuckles as he crosses the room.

JAYDEN
I know how anxious you are about
the money. I wanted to get it in
your hands before I left town.

CLAIRE
(taking envelope)
Vacation?

JAYDEN
I'm taking my sister to the Mayo
clinic.

CLAIRE
I'm sorry, that can't be good.

JAYDEN
They're starting a new study. The
details are boring, but I'm hoping
to get her enrolled. Laura is a
trooper, but—

CLAIRE
Laura?

JAYDEN
My sister. I'm not sure she'll
qualify, but nothing ventured,
nothing gained.

CLAIRE
I...I hope she makes it.

They trade looks as Claire realizes she's made a mistake.

FRANCOIS
Say, as an attorney, do you know
anyone in the police department?

JAYDEN
Why?

Francois points to the beer can.

FRANCOIS
Someone broke into the house last
night, and he might have left that.

JAYDEN
(to Claire)
A burglar? Were you home?

FRANCOIS
She was home and has a lump on her
head to prove it.

CLAIRE
A small lump. I'm fine.

JAYDEN
Get a plastic bag. I'll take the
can.

Francois heads for the stairs.

JAYDEN (CONT'D)
I don't have to go to Mayo.

CLAIRE
Of course, you do. Call me when
you get back?

Jayden frowns, confused.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Just call.

JAYDEN
One more thing, do you have a gun?

CLAIRE
Why would I need a gun

He gives her a don't-be-stupid look.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Besides that. No, I don't need a
gun.

JAYDEN
I can provide one.

She shakes her head.

CLAIRE
Call.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Graham and Parker walk through a house covered with fingerprint dust. Parker goes to the painting, swings it aside, and looks at the still locked safe.

GRAHAM
She didn't know the combination.

PARKER
How do you know that?

GRAHAM
She told me.

PARKER
When did you ask her?

GRAHAM
When we were smoking.

Parker closes the painting and turns away.

PARKER
Let's get started. This house
won't clean itself.

GRAHAM
You should call and ask how she is.

PARKER
How am I supposed to know she was
hurt? Don't be an idiot.

He passes Graham who balls his hands into fists and then relaxes.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Using a fireplace lighter, Claire lights a candle. Francois, chest under his arm, stands by the back door.

FRANCOIS
Candles?

CLAIRE
Supposed to soothe the nerves.

FRANCOIS
What did he want, Claire?

CLAIRE
I don't know.

FRANCOIS
If he didn't find it, and I don't
think he did, he'll be back.

CLAIRE
Stay here?

FRANCOIS
I'll be back.

She watches him leave, and after he's gone, she locks the door and sniffs the air.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Francois carefully marks the map, marking the grid. Claire, in pjs, steps in for a moment.

CLAIRE
I'm going to bed. You should too.

FRANCOIS
In a bit. I'm updating the map.

CLAIRE
You're chasing the unicorn.

FRANCOIS
Everyone should have a lost cause.

CLAIRE
What?

FRANCOIS
All his life, my father wanted to
locate the body of George Gordon
who died defending Khartoum.

CLAIRE
Who?

FRANCOIS

Chinese Gordon, a British officer who held off an Arab army for a year. He was beheaded and his body tossed in a well. My father so admired Gordon that he wanted to find the remains and reclaim them, return them to Britain for a proper ceremony.

CLAIRE

All his life?

FRANCOIS

It was a lost cause. Many others had tried to locate the body, and all had failed. My father read their accounts and kept maps and wrote notes. He even traveled to Khartoum, spent three weeks searching. All for naught. When he came home, he looked as beaten as anyone I have ever seen. I asked him why he kept looking.

CLAIRE

What did he say?

FRANCOIS

He said every man needs a lost cause, something to sop up time and effort, something that would never reach completion. He said the truly sad man was the one who had dreamed too small a dream, accomplished it, and stopped. His wasn't the impossible dream. He might have found Gordon's remains. But it is a lost cause, something so unlikely as to be impossible.

CLAIRE

Edward Teach is your lost cause?

FRANCOIS

Blackbeard's treasure. Isn't that a suitable lost cause?

CLAIRE

Very suitable Good night.

She leaves, and he returns to his map.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Francois stands behind the counter. On top are the map and tracing. He compares the two as the door opens. Parker smiles his way forward, and Francois puts the map under the counter.

PARKER
Good morning. Claire in?

FRANCOIS
Merci, no, she's taking a few days off.

PARKER
Vacation?

FRANCOIS
You may say that.

Parker notices the tracing on the counter. He recognizes the etching.

PARKER
Can you give her a message?

FRANCOIS
Oui.

PARKER
Tell her to take her time on my redo. My mother died and complicated the estate. You understand.

FRANCOIS
Tres bien. Is there anything else?

Parker taps the tracing.

PARKER
That looks interesting. Some kind of fireplace grate?

FRANCOIS
(folding up the tracing)
Ah, no, it's a screen for the boudoir. A chi-chi dressing screen no one actually uses.

PARKER
A one time thing or looking to mass produce?

FRANCOIS

Un time, but who knows. It could be one of those zillion-euro ideas everyone is always looking for, eh.

PARKER

Sometimes, you find treasure in the least expected place.

FRANCOIS

Treasure is always tres hidden, oui?

Parker laughs and backs away.

PARKER

When do you expect her?

FRANCOIS

A few days. Ring her.

Parker salutes and leaves. Francois watches, wondering.

EXT SIDEWALK - DAY

As Parker walks to his car, he pulls out his cell and dials.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Graham stretches Claire's red thong over a pillow. He picks up the pillow and licks the thong as his cell RINGS. Holding the pillow, he grabs his phone.

GRAHAM

Yes.

(beat)

Yes.

(beat)

Right away.

He kills the connection. Then, he holds up the pillow—and punches it across the room.

EXT MARINA - DAY

Francois hauls backpack, shovel, and metal detector down a pier. He stops by the motorboat, drops gear over the gunwale, and unknots the ties.

Fifty yards away, behind a piling, Graham watches. Even as he does, the motorboat backs out of its slip.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Parker leans against the counter. At the table, Graham eats a burger and sips beer.

GRAHAM

He was gone for hours. When he came back, he looked tired as hell. I don't think he found anything.

PARKER

He has the chest.

GRAHAM

I followed him to his apartment. I know where he lives.

PARKER

Tomorrow, we'll hit the apartment tomorrow.

GRAHAM

I'd rather do it in the dark.

PARKER

Don't be stupid. If he's home, you'll have a problem.

GRAHAM

I can handle frenchy.

PARKER

That's not the point. Minimal damage, Graham, minimal damage.

GRAHAM

We're past that.

PARKER

You can't spend doubloons in prison.

Graham doesn't answer.

PARKER (CONT'D)

Tomorrow, Graham.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

I don't know.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Claire gingerly holds a small, automatic pistol.

Jayden takes it from her.

JAYDEN
It's simple.

Jayden shows her a magazine and demonstrates how to load the pistol.

JAYDEN (CONT'D)
The magazine goes in the butt. Tap it hard to seat it. You pull back the slide which loads a cartridge into the breech and cocks the hammer. Then, all you do is aim and pull the trigger.

CLAIRE
I don't like guns.

JAYDEN
Nine out of ten times, all you have to do is show the gun. In another nine out of ten, all you need to do is fire. One percent of the time, you have to actually shoot someone. One time out of a hundred.

CLAIRE
What if the next time is that time?

JAYDEN
Then, shoot straight.

She shudders. The door opens, and Francois enters, chest under arm.

FRANCOIS
What the hell.

JAYDEN
Hold on. It's not what it looks like.

CLAIRE
Jayden is showing me how it works.

Francois sets down the chest and goes to the fridge for a beer.

JAYDEN
She needs protection.

FRANCOIS
I'm here.

JAYDEN
You can't stay forever.

FRANCOIS
For as long as it takes.

CLAIRE
Jayden's right. You have your own place.

FRANCOIS
But a gun?

JAYDEN
Guns are part of the south.

CLAIRE
I don't think I'll ever use it, but...

JAYDEN
Better to have and not need than to need and not have.

They look at each other, and they know it's true.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jayden and Claire stand by his car.

JAYDEN
I would feel better if you stayed with me.

CLAIRE
Hiding won't solve the problem.

JAYDEN
I can stay here.

CLAIRE
I have Francois, and you have Laura. By the way, how did it go at Mayo?

JAYDEN
They're still evaluating, but she hasn't been rejected. That's something.

CLAIRE
I hope she gets in.

JAYDEN

Thank you.

He pulls her closer and then kisses her. She kisses back.

They release, and he climbs into his car. She watches him drive away.

EXT. FRANCOIS APARTMENT - MORNING

Graham walks through the parking lot. He comes to the empty slot where Francois' car should be. Smiling, he keeps walking.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Claire and Francois sip coffee. He taps the chest absentmindedly.

CLAIRE

Going hunting?

FRANCOIS

I need a break. I have to rethink my approach.

CLAIRE

Giving up?

FRANCOIS

It's real, Claire. Lost but could be found. I simply have to find the right key.

He sets his empty cup in the sink.

FRANCOIS (CONT'D)

Mind keeping the chest for a day or two while I clear my head?

CLAIRE

I'm not the one obsessed with Eddy Teach.

FRANCOIS

Blackbeard.

(heads for door)

I'm going to swing by my place. See you at the store?

CLAIRE

Meet you there.

He leaves as she pours herself a second cup. Then, she runs her hand over the chest. Does she feel a vibe?

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Jayden stands in front of the safe, a sheet of paper in his hand. Beside him is his Assistant with a pad in hand. Behind them stands Parker.

PARKER

What happens to the contents?

JAYDEN

After we inventory, I'll take what I need and leave the rest in the safe. I can't think of a better place.

PARKER

But it all comes to me, right?

JAYDEN

You and Graham.

PARKER

Yeah, me and Graham.

The safe swings open and Jayden retrieves the first item.

JAYDEN

(to Assistant)

Continental life insurance policy.

He sets down the item and pulls out the next item.

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

One velvet pouch which contains...

He opens the pouch and takes out the gold doubloon.

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

One gold coin.

PARKER

Doubloon, it's a Spanish doubloon.

JAYDEN

Are you sure?

PARKER

Family heirloom.

JAYDEN
(to Assistant)
One gold, Spanish doubloon.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - DAY

Graham walks into the main room and looks around.

GRAHAM
What are you hiding, Frenchy?

EXT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - DAY

Francois pulls his car into the empty slot and climbs out.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Claire, ready for work, starts to walk out and stops. She grabs the tea chest and takes it with her.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - DAY

The front door opens, and Francois enters. He pays little attention and goes to the bedroom.

INT. FRANCOIS APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

A naked Francois enters and turns on the shower, waiting for it to get hot. Satisfied, he climbs in and soaps up.

Peeking around the door is Graham.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Jayden spins the dial on the safe and closes the painting.

JAYDEN
I'm taking the life insurance
policies so I can file claims.

PARKER
Makes sense to me. Say, have you
talked to Claire lately? I can't
seem to get a hold of her.

JAYDEN
She ran into a burglar a couple
nights ago, got hit in the head.
(MORE)

JAYDEN (CONT'D)

But she should be back at work today.

PARKER

My god, she's not hurt, is she?

JAYDEN

Nothing serious.

PARKER

Burglars are everywhere, aren't they?

JAYDEN

This one may not be around for long. We think he left his fingerprints behind.

PARKER

Fingerprints?

JAYDEN

On a beer can. Go figure.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Wearing a towel, Francois emerges from the bathroom. Graham steps up behind and smashes Francois with a tennis racket, sending Francois crashing to the bed.

Graham doesn't stop. He hits Francois over the back, cracking the composite racket, making Francois HOWL.

GRAHAM

Where is it?

Francois spins and raises his arms as the blows continue. Since the racket is broken, the blows are less effectual.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Where is it?

Francois ROARS and comes off the bed, tackling Graham. They crash to the floor and tussle like desperate men.

The fight rolls across the floor as each man fights like a cornered animal. Graham has the advantage. Yet, Francois is game. This isn't a fight he can afford to lose. It could go either way—before Graham manages to slam an elbow into Francois' face.

Stunned, bleeding, Francois' hands drop.

Allowing Graham to grab Francois' hair and slam his face into the floor—three times.

Francois is totally beaten.

Graham rolls away, gets to his feet, and kicks Francois in the ribs again and again.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Where is it, you sonofabitch?

Francois can't answer.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Where?

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Claire places the tea chest under the counter and enters the back office.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - DAY

Unconscious, Francois is tied to a chair. A glass of water is thrown in his face but doesn't wake him.

Graham looks around and grabs a pan from a shelf. He fills the pan with water and dumps it on Francois who wakes, groggy and blinking.

GRAHAM
Wakey, wakey, frenchy. We have games to play.

FRANCOIS
Who the fuck are you?

GRAHAM
You don't ask questions.

Graham smacks Francois with the empty pan.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
I ask the questions.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - DEN - DAY

Parker has his phone to his ear.

PARKER

You left a beer can in her house?
How fucking stupid are you? When
you get this message, call. We
have to figure a way out.

INT. FRANCOIS' APARTMENT - DAY

Using a sharp knife, Graham cuts a crude X on Francois' chest. Francois screams into the sock in his mouth.

GRAHAM

You think you can steal our
treasure? Enough?

Francois nods, and Graham removes the sock.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Where is the chest?

Francois whispers, and Graham leans closer. He turns his head to Francois who jerks forward and bites Graham's ear.

Graham jerks back, and his ear rips off.

Francois grins, the bloody ear between his teeth, as Graham HOWLS.

Blood running down his neck, Graham leaps forward and buries his knife in Francois's chest. Francois spits out the ear and SCREAMS.

Grinning, Graham stabs again and again, and Francois goes silent.

Dead.

Graham backs away, leaving the knife in Francois. Then, Graham grabs the torn off ear and heads for the door.

INT. INNER SPACE - DAY

Claire studies the tea chest, comparing it to images on her computer. None of the images match. She opens the chest and finds the tracing and map.

She spreads them out on the counter. Then, she lowers the lid and compares the carving to the map and tracing.

The map corresponds to the chest remarkably well. She frowns. Was Francois right?

She looks up and sees Parker's car slide to a stop outside. She grabs the chest and map and slides them under the counter, leaving the tracing. As the door opens, and Parker enters, she slides around the counter.

CLAIRE
Parker.

PARKER
Busy?

CLAIRE
Not as busy as I'd like. What can I do for you?

PARKER
Actually, I'm looking for my brother. Have you seen Graham?

She's a bit confused.

CLAIRE
Why would Graham come here?

PARKER
Because of the doubloon.

CLAIRE
Doubloon?

PARKER
A gold doubloon our grandfather found. Graham believes there are a lot more doubloons buried on an island around here.

CLAIRE
Yes, but what does that have to do with me?

PARKER
Graham heard your partner, that French guy talking about treasure.

CLAIRE
Really? When was this?

PARKER
I'm not sure. Anyway, I thought perhaps Graham came looking.

CLAIRE
No, no, I can't say I've seen him.

PARKER

In a way, I'm kinda glad. It gave me an excuse to visit.

He grins, and she half smiles.

PARKER (CONT'D)

How about tonight? I have some soccer tickets. What do you say? A bit of Ole and a late dinner?

CLAIRE

Sorry, I can't. Previous engagement. By the way, didn't you tell me Jayden was married?

PARKER

Yes, the Christmas card, from Jayden and Laura.

CLAIRE

Laura is his sister.

PARKER

Sister?

CLAIRE

She has a genetic issue that they're trying to cure.

PARKER

Well, I'm fried. Really? I'm sorry to hear that.

She watches him carefully, but he reveals nothing.

CLAIRE

I can see where you could make a mistake.

She goes back around the counter and notices the tracing. As she reaches for it, he snatches it off the counter.

PARKER

What's this?

CLAIRE

Francois is designing a tapestry. You know, one of those things you see in old castles.

PARKER

Damn intricate design. Reminds me of something.

CLAIRE
I don't know what. It's original.

PARKER
(tapping paper)
Yeah, but it's like a cloud. A cloud always looks like something else. I saw a cloud yesterday that looked like an island. You know, like Cuba or something. As a matter of fact, this screen sort of looks like an island. You see an island?

CLAIRE
I think more like a dragon. I think he's trying for an oriental vibe.

PARKER
Yeah, yeah, I think maybe you're right.

He taps the paper one more time and backs away.

PARKER (CONT'D)
If your date falls through...

CLAIRE
I'll call.

She watches him leave before she picks up the tracing and stares.

INT. JAXI'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Graham, his ear bandaged, pours vodka into a glass.

PARKER (O.S.)
Where the hell have you been?

GRAHAM
He didn't have it.

Parker comes over and notices Graham's ear.

PARKER
Jesus, what happened to you?

GRAHAM
The sonofabitch bit off my ear.

PARKER

What?

GRAHAM

My fucking ear! He ripped it off!

Graham chugs the vodka.

PARKER

What the hell happened, Graham,
what did you do?

Graham refills his glass.

GRAHAM

He didn't have it. That means she
does.

PARKER

WHAT DID YOU DO?!

Graham picks up the glass and drinks it while staring at
Parker.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You killed him, didn't you?

Graham doesn't answer.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You stupid BASTARD!

Parker cuffs Graham up the side of the head, right on his
missing ear. Graham YELPS and backs away as Parker keeps up
the assault.

PARKER (CONT'D)

First that dumb antique lady, then
mom, and now the French guy? What
the fuck are you thinking?

Graham drops the glass and tries to bat away Parker's hands,
but he can't keep up. The ear bleeds afresh.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You think you can go around killing
anyone you please? You think the
police are as stupid as you are?

Graham starts to cry, protecting his ear and falling to his
knees. Panting, grunting, Parker slaps Graham's head over
and over.

PARKER (CONT'D)
Stupid, stupid, stupid.

Parker backs off, goes to the cabinet, and fills a glass with vodka. Graham blubbers, crawling to a corner.

GRAHAM
He attacked me, he ripped off my ear. What was I supposed to do? What, Parker? My ear! They couldn't sew it back on. I lost my ear!

PARKER
And for what, Graham, for what? He didn't even have the fucking chest.

GRAHAM
Because she has it. You know that. She has it.

PARKER
What if she does?

GRAHAM
It's ours.

Parker studies Graham.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
The doubloons belong to us.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Claire leaves her car. She carries the chest and her purse, her cell to her ear.

CLAIRE
Where are you? Call me.

She kills the call with a frown.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Claire sets the chest on the table, goes to a cabinet, and retrieves a bottle of vodka. She leaves it standing on the table.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Claire passes through, the doorbell RINGS! With a smile, she opens the door.

PARKER
There you are.

CLAIRE
What are you doing here?

PARKER
May we come inside?

Graham appears behind Parker.

CLAIRE
What happened to his ear?

PARKER
It's pretty hot out here.

She steps aside, and they pass by. She closes the door and faces them.

CLAIRE
What is it, what do you want?

GRAHAM
You know what we want.

PARKER
(To Graham)
Shut up. Look, Claire, we want to make this as easy as possible.

CLAIRE
Make what as easy as possible?

PARKER
I know how it is. You see a doubloon, and suddenly, everything is treasure.

CLAIRE
I don't-

He holds up a hand to stop her.

PARKER
Don't deny it. We know. You have the chest, grandfather's chest. Or should I call it Edward Teach's chest?

GRAHAM
We know.

CLAIRE
Get out.

PARKER
Don't be that way.

CLAIRE
Get out before I call the police.

GRAHAM
That's what he said.

CLAIRE
Who?

PARKER
(to Graham)
Not another fucking word.

CLAIRE
GET OUT!

PARKER
Shhhh, shhhh, don't make this any
harder than it has to be. Where is
the chest, Claire?

She looks from Parker to Graham.

CLAIRE
What did you do to Francois?

Graham grins.

PARKER
He didn't do anything. The chest.

CLAIRE
Follow me.

CLAIRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Claire leads Parker and Graham into the kitchen and points to
the chest.

CLAIRE
Take it.

Parker goes to the chest and opens it, finding the map and tracing. As he spreads out the map, Graham looking over his shoulder, Claire moves to her purse.

GRAHAM

Is it?

PARKER

Looks like it.

The pore over the map.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Don't move.

They look to where Claire points her gun at them.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Sit on the floor.

PARKER

What are you doing, Claire?

CLAIRE

Sit or I'll shoot.

Graham takes a step away Parker, forcing Claire to split her attention.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Stop!

PARKER

Put it away, Claire. You're not going to shoot anyone.

Graham keeps moving. Claire swings the gun back and forth.

PARKER (CONT'D)

All we want is the chest.

Parker folds up the map and places it in the chest even as Graham reaches the side, his hand snaking back to a rack of knives.

CLAIRE

I won't warn you again.

PARKER

It's ours. You know that.

Graham takes another step.

Claire FIRES. The bullet EXPLODES the vodka on the table.

Everyone stops.

Then, Graham laughs. She missed. She aims again as Parker's hand knocks the gun from her hands.

As the gun skitters across the floor, Graham leaps forward. Claire whirls, but she's too slow. He grabs her hair and jerks her back.

GRAHAM
Stupid bitch.

He raises the knife.

BLAM

Graham frowns. He releases Claire and turns.

BLAM

The second shot hits, and blood blossoms on his chest.

Across the room, Parker watches Graham collapse. A horrified Claire can't move.

Parker lets out an anguished CRY.

PARKER
See what you made me do?

He crosses to Graham and looks down at his dead brother.

PARKER (CONT'D)
I saved your life.

CLAIRE
Am I supposed to thank you?

PARKER
No, because I'm going to take back
what I gave.

CLAIRE
You'll never get away with it.

PARKER
Easy. You shot Graham. I wrestled
away the gun and shot you.

She gapes.

PARKER (CONT'D)
It's a horrible tragedy. And
believe me, I don't want to do it.

CLAIRE

You don't have to. Just take the chest.

PARKER

To set the record straight. Graham killed Frenchy. He was a little out of control.

CLAIRE

You haven't done anything wrong. There's no need to shoot me.

PARKER

Someone has to pay for Graham.

Jayden bursts into the room. Before Parker can turn, Jayden plows into him, sending the gun flying.

The two men grapple on the floor, fighting as only desperate men can. Gouging, punching, wrestling, Jayden puts up a good fight, but he can't overcome Parker who knocks Jayden silly.

Parker scrambles to his feet and kicks Jayden several times before he turns.

And finds Claire pointing the pistol at him.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You already tried once. Don't be stupid.

She FIRES.

The bullet hits Parker in the shoulder. He frowns at the seeping hole.

She FIRES

The second bullet hits his hip. He lurches, catching himself on the table.

She FIRES

The third bullet hits him in the stomach. He sees another hole leak blood.

She looks at the pistol, the slide locked. No more ammo.

He looks at her.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You're not much of a shot.

She watches him lunge from table to counter where he grabs a knife. He pulls himself along the counter as she backs away.

Her hand finds the candle lighter and she snatches it. She shows it to him as she moves to the vodka covered table.

CLAIRE

Drop it or I swear I'll set the chest on fire.

PARKER

You're bluffing.

She clicks the lighter to show him the flame.

PARKER (CONT'D)

You won't burn up a million dollars.

She sets the map on fire.

Parker drops the knife and lunges to the table. He snatches up the chest as the fire reaches it. He hugs the burning chest, snuffing out the fire against his clothes. He totters for a moment before he falls on his back, still clutching the chest.

Claire grabs dish towels and covers the table, snuffing out the fire. Smoke fills the room. Coughing, she helps Jayden to his feet. He's groggy as she helps him out of the kitchen.

She returns a few moments later. She stands over Parker who looks dead. She reaches for the chest, and his hand grabs her arm. For a few seconds they wrestle. Then, she drops her knee into his wounded stomach, and he BELLOWS.

She pulls away the chest and steps back.

PARKER (CONT'D)

(reaching)

Please.

EXT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jayden sits on the grass, bewildered. Claire, holding a cell phone, comes and sits beside him.

JAYDEN

What was that all about?

CLAIRE

The wrong dream, the wrong dream.

INT. CLAIRE'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Atop Claire's bureau sits the slightly scorched tea chest.

FADE OUT